

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER.

"BEHOLD I BRING YOU GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY."

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SAADHS, OR NATIVE CHRISTIANS, AT DELHI.

Our Readers will doubtless recollect the account we have heretofore given of a remarkable assemblage of Hindoos or Native Christians, discovered by Anund Messeeh, in a Grove near Delhi: (See pp. 3, 164.) The following particulars respecting the origin and principles of these Extraordinary People, were obtained by Rev. Henry Fisher, from one of the principal or head men of a Division of the Sect.

About 160 years ago, Jogee Das, son of Gopal Sing of Bindair, when at an advanced age, had the command of a body of troops in the service of the Rajah of Doolpoor, and was slain in action with the enemies of this prince. His dead body was not suffered to remain neglected on the field of battle; but was miraculously recalled to life, as is pretended, by a stranger, in the habit of a mendicant; whose holy and venerable appearance excited in the mind of the astonished Jogee Das the deepest respect and confidence. The stranger led him away into the solitudes of a distant mountain; and there detained him in the diligent study of those sacred truths which it was intended he should disseminate among the people, when he again returned to the world. As soon as he was judged sufficiently qualified for the labours of his mission, the Mendicant Stranger returned him to his friends, with a commission to inculcate the doctrines which he had received. His relatives and friends were astonished at his unexpected return, and flocked round him with exclamations of surprise and joy; saluting him with their wonted phrase, "Ram! Ram!" "And who," exclaimed he, "is Ram? Oh! understand and learn to know yourselves. The spirit now within me is no longer that of Jogee Das. Behold the testimony to the truth of my assertion!" and, immediately addressing himself to a neighbouring Neem Tree, he caused it to

utter articulate sounds familiar to their ears, and such expressions as had formerly been used by Jogee Das himself. After thus miraculously convincing them of the extraordinary powers which had been delegated to him, he proceeded to set before them the special object of his Mission, in words to the following effect:—"I am sent to you by the Sut Gooroo," or True Pastor, "to give you a proper understanding, and to deliver you from this ocean of error in which you are drowning." They prostrated themselves before him, and kissed his feet.—"Stop!" said he, "and hear me. Give all your heart to God. You are vexed by the Angel of Hell. Oh! wherefore will you remain thus blind! Receive light, and walk henceforth in the way of God. The place of rest is far off, and the path of the world is difficult. He only, who is strong and faithful, can travel it. To overcome the Wicked One, is an arduous task: it is to walk upon the edge of a sharp simitar: therefore seat yourselves in the vessel of the knowledge of the Holy Teacher, and you shall be transported beyond the disquieting waves." From this period Jogee Das had many converts to his opinions, among his own immediate relatives and friends; and, from among them, he selected, as his Disciple, one who should assist him in his labour, to convert the people from idolatry to the worship of God as a Spirit, and with the heart and life. He chose Bheer Bhan to attend him in a circuit, which he began to make in order to propagate his new opinions. At each place, where he met with success, it was his regular habit to find out, on his departure, one of the Disciples whom he thought most trust-worthy, to take charge of the young Congregation to be left behind, as to discipline and moral conduct.—He departed from this world at Bindee Su, without apprising his followers of

his intention, in the following manner. Reclining himself upon the earth, after his usual custom, to repose for the night, he drew over him a large sheet, and was supposed to be asleep. The following morning, however, on removing the sheet, he was no more to be seen; only the ground which his body had pressed was beautifully embellished with fresh and fragrant flowers.

So much for the fabulous minglings in this narrative. The Saadhs appear to possess little or no learning, and very few speculative doctrines; and, indeed, in the simplicity of their minds, hold out, as I conceive, the most inviting promise of successful labour to the Christian Missionary.— Their hearts are apparently prepared for such an effort in their favour, by their present predisposition to spirituality of opinion, in all that concerns the Supreme Being and the human soul. They profess to believe in one Invisible God, who retains every thing in His own sovereign power; is everywhere present, and is infinitely merciful; and who, in proof of this exceeding disposition to mercy, sent, or rather deputed, the Sut Gooroo to enlighten and instruct poor ignorant men. This Sut Gooroo, who instructed Jogee Das (to whom also the Saadhs occasionally apply the same honorary title) in the knowledge of the truth, they esteem as the immediate Chela, or pupil, of the Supreme Being.

Is not this idea a probable legendary misrepresentation of the information communicated to the Saadhs, in the first instance, by Jogee Das, who, if he was a Christian, as I think by no means improbable, would teach his disciples the doctrine of Christ's Divinity, of his being the True Shepherd, the only enlightened teacher of a pure spiritual religion, and the free gift of mercy from God, suited to supply all the wants and miseries of sinful men?

They also utterly exclude from their religious system all the Hindoo Deities, reject with abhorrence the use of images, and hold the Incarnations of

Vishnoo to have been great Conquerors, or some disinterested and famous Benefactors of mankind, by whom they have been idolatrously exalted into the seat of God. They consider pilgrimages as folly; and have no faith whatever in the efficacy of ablutions, neither do they practise them at all, except for the purposes of cleanliness. Jysingh smiled very significantly, on being asked what he thought of the Ganges and the Jumna: he said, they were very useful rivers, and should be considered merely as objects of notice whereby to call to mind the goodness of God. They do not receive the doctrine of transmigration, or pretend to any authentic knowledge of the creation of the world. They fully expect a future Judgment, which will establish the virtuous and holy in a state of uninterrupted happiness; but will doom the wicked to dreadful torments, whereby they shall expiate the sins which they have committed in this world. The duration of the punishment of the condemned will, however, be increased by the nature and provocation of their respective crimes; and eternal happiness will be the final issue of all things. The Sut Gooroo will be visibly present at the Great Day of Account; but they do not seem to anticipate any benefit from his intercession in their behalf, or to have any notion of atonement but that of their own sufferings. For divine worship they have no temple, but a hut called Jumlu Ghur, usually situated in the village where the elder or principal of a Congregation may happen to reside.

Jogee Das arranged for his people, that they should meet weekly on Saturdays; on which days they were to lay aside all kind of labour, and in the ensuing night to pass the hours in praise of and prayer to God, and in religious meditation. The Saadhs, however, being principally poor labouring men, hardly bestead for daily bread, found that so frequent an interruption to their means of support for themselves and families, could not be conveniently submitted to; and, there-

fore, in the course of time, a monthly meeting was substituted for their former weekly one, and they now assemble only on the day of every full moon.

The simplicity of this meeting is very interesting; and cannot but strike us with its similarity, in some respects, to our Sacramental Feast. The whole of the Saadhs who reside at a convenient distance, females included, assemble at the nearest Jumlu Ghur; each person furnishing, according to his means, flour, ghee, milk, or sugar. Part of the Congregation is employed, during the day, in making these materials into bread; while others converse on the affairs of the community, or investigate any complaints that may be brought forward against their people. In the evening, the bread is placed upon a small elevation in the Jumlu Ghur, and, after a short extempore prayer, divided among the guests. A vessel containing sherbet, called the "cup of fellowship," is also passed round; and the remainder of the night is spent in rehearsing verses in praise of the Sut Gooroo, and listening to the legendary stories of their Founder, and directions for their moral conduct in life.

Any member convicted of immorality is precluded from participating in their food, or associating in their worship. Excommunication is their special punishment; the duration of this discipline being wholly regulated by and proportioned to the atrocity of the offence.

Besides these Monthly Meetings of the various District Divisions, there is a general Annual Assembly in the month of March: the spot determined by its local convenience. Last year it took place at Delhi, at the time when Anund met with them in the Tope, or Grove; and, this year, they will assemble at Futtygurh. The business of this public meeting corresponds with that of the monthly—their special object being to canvass the moral interests of the whole party, and to investigate the conduct of the different Members.

Their moral precepts appear to be

of an excellent character; forbidding falsehood, dishonesty, all dissolute practices, and flagitious actions.—They are directed to earn their living by honest industry; and are never to eat the bread of idleness, or to receive presents.

Their nuptial rite is simple; all unnecessary expense being scrupulously avoided. Polygamy is never allowed, and even widows are forbidden to unite with a second husband; while persons of different trades intermarry without the least hesitation, there being no difficulty in taking a wife from any with whom an agreement can be made.

As they are taught to esteem the soul the immortal part of man, and as of the greatest value, they have no prescribed mode of disposing of their dead. Formerly, the bodies were cast into the jungle, to be devoured by the wild beasts: to this succeeded the practice of interment; but, at present, they usually consume them with fire, or cast them into the adjacent rivers. When on their way to the funeral pile or rivers to dispose of their dead, instead of the words pronounced by Hindoos—"Ram! Ram! Sul hum!" they substitute, "Attend to your devotions!" They know nothing of any rites for the repose of the departed soul; but believe that it is either happy or miserable according to its conduct while in the body, and that at the future great Day of Judgment body and soul will be reunited.

Much anxiety prevails among them respecting a due preparation for this awful Day of Judgment; but their present, indeed their only stay, seems to be derived from their own devotional exercises: and when their consciences are distressed through falls into sin, their consolations are drawn from the same source, trusting that they will secure (if accompanied by strong determinations never again to do what they ought not to do) complete reconciliation with God. The conviction upon their minds seems settled, that a rigid performance of their several duties will certainly secure them

future happiness; and yet, with much apparent humility, they acknowledge themselves sinners.

The Hindoos generally seem to know very little about these people; and, indeed, to every body, to whom I have mentioned them, they appear quite a new object of interest and attention. They have been erroneously supposed to be a branch of the Joinus.

It is evident that the Saadhs are familiarly acquainted with the numbers and places of residence of their people; so that a frequent intercourse among them probably takes place. Jysingh, from memory, mentioned about thirty villages and towns where Saadhs reside, and particularized the various families of each place.

Three or four years ago, (Anund heard, in the Tope, five or six,) a copy or two of the Serampore Translation of some of the Gospels were brought from Hurdwan, by some of their persuasion, who had visited the Fair. Of the spirit or proper meaning of the contents of these books, however, they knew very little; till, about ten months ago, some passages were read to them and explained by Anund Messeeh. At first a good deal of superstitious apprehension deterred them from meddling with religious matters; a fanciful persuasion also having taken possession of their minds, that, if they should show any willingness to listen to Christian instruction, we should, in propagating our tenets, use like instruments and means with the Mahomedans, for whom they retain a rooted antipathy. As they have, however, obtained further information, their prejudices are considerably abated; so much so, indeed, that they are very ready to receive and to use our books, and to listen to Anund's comments. Jysingh stated his readiness to undertake, with assistance, to read to, and to teach to read, the children of the Saadhs; who are all very anxious to learn to read and write, whenever any opportunity presents itself. Jysingh is also of opinion, and indeed has no doubt, that many Saadhs will attend, when leisure from their agricultural or other pur-

suits will allow, to hear the Gospels read; as in some places, where they have the books, has been already done.

In consequence of these communications, (the whole of which I had great pleasure in laying before Mr. Metcalf, and who himself conversed a good deal both with Anund and with Jysingh,) our new friend was engaged to set about the establishment of a School in the village of Kowaly, where he resides; I undertaking to send Anund to assist in the outset; and purposing to be guided by circumstances, as to its continuance in future. On Anund's arrival, in the first week of January, he found that Jysingh, true to his engagements, had commenced his little School.

Anund informs us, that the opening of the School was considered an important event. To ensure to it prosperity and permanency, the inhabitants had, previous to Anund's arrival, consulted an astrologer, that the commencement of the School might be under the auspices of a happy conjunction. He fixed on the 27th of December last.

Some Brahmins in the neighbourhood have expressed displeasure; considering the selection of the Saadhs as Teachers, to the seclusion and neglect of themselves, as a very unfair and ill-judged preference; since the communication of the rudiments of learning should, in their opinion, have remained their exclusive prerogative. It is not improbable that the strange opinions which have been propagated in the immediate neighbourhood of Kowaly and the adjacent villages, have their origin in the dissatisfaction and consequent misrepresentations of these Brahmins: some of the people having taken up an idea, that unworthy and interested motives have prompted this plan of education; and that, so soon as the children may be found qualified for their destined occupation and employment, the parents will be forcibly deprived of them. Time, however, will show the folly of such imaginations. In the mean while, we try to go quietly forward.

As Anund has been repeatedly cautioned, not to let his warm imagination delude him into any exaggerated representations of what he may deem worth observing and communicating, I have no hesitation in believing this statement.

From the Panoplist.

EXTRACTS FROM THE JOURNAL OF
MRS. NICHOLS.

[Our readers are aware, that Mrs. Nichols was one of the missionary company, who embarked for Bombay, Oct. 5, 1817. During the first twelve days of the passage she was not able to hold a pen, from excessive sea-sickness and consequent debility. On commencing the journal, and after mentioning the many comforts she had enjoyed, and the kind attentions she had received, she proceeds thus:]

In recounting some of the mercies of God, I would not fail to mention his great condescension, in granting me, as I humbly believe, the comforting influences of his holy Spirit. In the midst of pain and distress, I was enabled to lean on his Almighty arm, and trust my life and soul in his hands. I would adore his name forever, that I was made willing to be entirely at his disposal; willing to live, to die, or to suffer as much pain and sickness as the wisdom of God might inflict. Who would not rejoice in such a heavenly frame of mind? Who would not adore the infinite grace of God, for such expressions of his love—for such manifestations of himself, and for such an acquiescence in his will? "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

Sabbath Oct. 26.—A delightful day. Worship on deck. Mr. Nichols preached on the worth of the soul. The meeting was solemn, and all appeared gratified. We hope our hearts in prayer, and our voices in singing have been in unison with those of our Christian friends, who have this day had the privilege of worshipping God in his own house. How comforting to us, that even in this our floating habitation, we can find a place for the worship of the same God, who has been the God of the redeemed in all ages; who was the God of our pious ancestors, and who is exalted in the hearts

of many of our beloved friends.

My dear friends, value highly the privilege of worshipping God in his own house; it cannot be duly estimated. How glad should we be to go to the house of God, in company with our friends. But we will not forget that this is among those favours of which we expected to be deprived, at least for a season.

Tuesday, 28. This morning we were early called from sleep to see a sail; and hoping it would afford an opportunity to relieve the hearts of our friends by letters, we hasted to our writing desks, began, and some of us nearly finished letters, when we were informed, that she was a ship bound to Europe. This was a considerable disappointment.

Saturday, Nov. 1. Here I am employed again on deck with my writing desk, and thinking of home. Now, my dear parents, I know you would rejoice, yes, abundantly rejoice, could you know how well I am this moment. Since the Saco has been my abode, I have never before felt so free from sickness and pain; though if I were at home with my present feelings, I should say I was sick.

We were much gratified to day with the sight of visitors from Africa; several swallows and a hawk. The poor little swallows were exceedingly fatigued; for they could find no rest for the sole of their foot, till they lighted tremblingly on our ship. We have fed and tamed one, and hope it will accompany us to Bombay.

Sabbath, Nov. 2. Brother Graves preached on deck an excellent sermon. It did seem to me, that the means used for the good of these precious souls would be blessed. Text, "*Come, for all things are now ready.*" It was affecting and moving. O that it might take hold on the hearts of these stupid men.

The sisters had a prayer meeting immediately after divine service, for the particular object of pleading that the efforts of the day might have a salutary effect on those who sail with us. It was a most precious sea-

son to us. O what a privilege, that we may have access to the throne of grace on every trial, and in every emergency. We would bless thee, O thou who hearest prayer.

Monday, Nov. 3. A shark was taken to-day. This is an exploit more interesting than you can conceive of. He was conducted by a most beautiful little "pilot fish," who seemed to act as his attendant; for when the bait was thrown out, this little creature hastened to it, and returned to the shark, appearing to direct him to the prey. This terrible devourer seized it with astonishing voracity. The strong iron hook pierced his under jaw. After a terrible resistance, the great creature was, to our admiration, drawn on board, which required the exertions of several men. His weight was about 150 pounds. His mouth is so large, and so constructed, that he could very easily take in a man's head. He had two rows of sharp teeth set on both jaws. This afternoon was the most uncomfortable season we have had. The heat is very oppressive, and we hardly know what to do with ourselves. We are daily approaching the equator. There we hope to meet some vessel bound to America, for we wish to send some communications to our ever dear friends. We do long for an opportunity to relieve their hearts, by some fresh news of our circumstances, our prosperity and comfort. But we will wait with patience; for God knows infinitely better than we, when it will be best that they have the gratification.

It is now nearly sun-set, and tea will soon be ready. I suppose you have but just dined. We are before you in time about three hours; consequently, our meeting this evening, (it being the first Monday of the month,) will be three hours sooner than those of our dear Christian friends whom we have left behind. However, if we are enabled by the spirit of divine grace "to agree touching the same thing," it may be no discouragement to us, that our requests do not ascend at the same moment. God is in every place, and

in every place a prayer-hearing God.

Tuesday, 4. A calm. It is distressing to stand still in the midst of an immense ocean. The ship is lying nearly motionless. This is a tedious season to the seamen, and also to us; for it seems highly desirable to advance, considering we have such a great work before us. But it is the Lord's, and we are his, and we are confident too, that he knows infinitely best how to manage the affairs of his own kingdom. This thought is enough to silence us into acquiescence, and we would never indulge the presumptuous wish to direct.

We are very much overcome with the excessive heat of this climate.—Every thing like clothing is burdensome. I suppose, this afternoon you are comfortable by a fire, and perhaps with bombazet gowns; while we are panting for a cooling breeze. Did I not hope to be more useful in a heathen than in my native land, surely I would by all means prefer New England to this sun, which scorches and melts every thing on which it shines. How refreshing would be a cup of cold water. The heat and the motion of the vessel contribute very much to perpetuate my sea-sickness. But I am much better than I have been; am able to sit up all day, and this is a great favor; I am able also to write, read, and converse some. These are favors which I lately feared I should not so soon enjoy. The Lord has been my helper, and blessed be his name forever.

Nov. 6. This is the first rainy day we have had.

Yesterday about 10 o'clock we discovered a sail. This was life to all on board, and we were more abundantly rejoiced when we saw it approach us. This was the first time I ever enjoyed the pleasure of hearing a vessel spoken. We spoke several soon after we left Boston; but I was not able to be on deck. It was delightful intercourse, for we learned we were not the only inhabitants of God's creation.

[Persons, who have never been at sea, can hardly judge how interesting

a circumstance it is to speak a vessel. To the reflecting mind it often brings very sublime associations. After having been a long time without seeing any human being but the small company on board, to meet with a tall ship, just at the dusk of the evening, from a remote part of the world and belonging to people of a different nation; then to exchange useful information, and, after a few moments, to proceed on their different courses;—all this is calculated to give enlarged views of the great human family, and to fill the heart with benevolent desires. What happy intercourse will subsist between the whole population of the globe, when the gospel shall have subdued the selfishness of man, and the reign of love shall have become universal.]

It was the *Caroline* of Liverpool, bound to Rio Janeiro, South America. The clerk, first mate, and several seamen, were dispatched in the boat, to convey some letters which we had written to America. We sent five. I lament the want of time to write more. You know how much I calculated to do after I embarked, and I have done nothing but what you see. If health were given, I think I could do something.

22. Well did the Psalmist say, "Thy way, O God is in the sea; and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known."

[Mrs. N. here describes severe sickness of the nervous kind, with which she had been afflicted for two weeks. At times she suffered distressing spasms, which were relieved by throwing 8 or 10 pails of water in her face, as fast as two men could throw it. The application of water in this way invariably had a good effect in removing the spasmodic affections.]

To-day we were called on deck to see two large whales. What an immense variety of fish inhabit the ocean. How wonderfully God has provided for the wants of man. When on land we have no such fish as we have at sea; when at sea, no such fish as we have on land, except salt fish,

and this is truly excellent. Never before did I relish it as I do now. My dear parents, we are truly grateful for the apples you put up for us; not only the dried ones, but the green russets. They are so precious to us, that we have counted what remain, and have to-day 40! If they could be preserved, how glad should we be to have 40 bushels.

To-day we have a vertical sun. We stood erect on deck without any shadow. This was something entirely new to us; and strange to tell, it was so cool, that winter clothes were very comfortable.

Sabbath, 23. Passed the tropic of Capricorn. Brother Graves preached on deck. The subject of the discourse was, "They all with one consent began to make excuse."

Dec. 2. Lat. 36, 01, S. Long. 15, 59, W. Now if sister A. or M. would look at the map of the world, she might see exactly where we are on the vast ocean: Here we have been led on by the winds and waves for 58 days, and have advanced towards a heathen land about 7,000 miles. What a distance. Who of our loved family, two years ago, ever dreamed of such a wide separation of its members? Who of its happy circle then thought, that oceans would sunder all verbal intercourse, and place two of its members 15,000 miles from their father's dwelling? A dwelling that lives in our memories with peculiar fondness. Almost every day is a witness to our recollection of it by conversation; and surely there has not a day passed yet without bearing abundant testimony to our homeward thoughts. We love to dwell on past scenes; we do love to recapitulate former conversations, to rehearse the particulars of many endearing interviews, and we delight to portray what we suppose is your present situation.

But though we do all this, and much more; though joy would fill our souls, could we spend a day or two with you, or an evening by the side of a comfortable fire; yet *we wish not to return*. If we should now meet a vessel, bound

home, with every convenience to take us as passengers, we would resist the pleasing temptation. Seeing God has given us so much evidence, that this is the path he has chosen for us, we rather walk in it,—though we hazard our lives and every temporal good,—than to travel in one marked out by ourselves; though by this means we lose the society of friends dear to us as our own lives.

On Saturday, Sabbath, and Monday we had "Cape weather," very rainy and foggy. On Monday morning we were waked early by a tremendous roll of the ship. Every thing that was not previously secured in the cabin, and in our rooms, was dashed about in every direction.

Saturday, Dec. 6. To day we see flocks of birds, ducks, &c. we suppose from the Cape; sometimes on the wing, and sometimes in the water.

Dec. 9. Lat. 39, 23, S. Long. 3, E. I feel so well this afternoon, that I am exceeding reluctant to let any inconvenience prevent the use of my pen. At this very moment we have a heavy gale. The ocean is very tempestuous, the ship tosses, and we have just been talking on the importance of being ready. Yes, we must be in preparation, constant preparation, to give our account for eternity.

A dark night is just approaching; the wind is rising: the mountain wave is growing larger and larger. At this moment, while the motion of the ship is so great as scarcely to allow me to hold the pen, the thought strikes me, that this may be the last opportunity I may ever have of addressing my beloved parents. Before the rising of another sun, your loving children may have their graves in the caverns of the great deep. How deeply solemn is the thought. O are we ready? Can we now cheerfully resign our lives into the hands of him who gave them? What if all our fond hopes of usefulness in a heathen land should be so early disappointed. What if the devouring waves should become possessors of the treasure, entrusted to us by the kind hand of charity, for the

building of the precious kingdom of the Saviour in a land of paganism and moral death? What if our dear friends are never to hear from us? What if no messenger is spared to carry the dreadful news?

Dec. 10. Lat. 39, 31, S. Long. 7, 17, E. After a night of ceaseless motion, and almost sleepless too, we are permitted to see the light of another day, under circumstances of tolerable comfort. It sometimes seemed as if the ship, and every thing appertaining to her would be destroyed.

Dec. 13. To-day directly opposite the Cape of Good Hope. We have a very heavy sea. It seems sometimes as if the ship would upset. Sister G. and myself are sea-sick; the others in perfect health. Large flocks of birds are flying all around us. We have very squally weather, and are liable to sudden changes.

Sabbath, Dec. 14. No public worship on deck to-day. The motion of the ship is so great, that we can neither stand, sit, nor lie, with comfort. Mr. N. spent a season in the fore-castle, reading to, and praying with those of the men, who are not on the watch. They treated him respectfully, but are not apparently affected with divine truth. They act according to the maxim, "No Sabbath in blue water."

Dec. 15. The winds and the waves are still favorable. While they roar and rise, they are rapidly wafting us to our desired haven. The day before yesterday we sailed 230 miles in 24 hours. This you will say is astonishingly rapid. Thanks to our Heavenly Father for his abounding goodness. Last night there was very sharp lightning. We have just been talking of the pleasure it would afford us to call at the Cape and get some fruit.—Oranges, lemons, figs, grapes, raisins, apples, and better pears than we ever tasted, may be had there in great abundance. What would be still more pleasant, we should then see the inhabitants of the land. But we are now several hundred miles beyond the Cape.

Dec. 16. The Lord is surely our

helper. He keeps us in perfect safety. We are flying on the wings of the wind. We have sailed at an astonishing rate for ten days. Our hopes are very much strengthened, that God has an important work for us to do in a heathen land. O for the privilege of laboring, and toiling, and suffering for the souls of the heathen.

From the Sangerfield Intelligencer.

REVIVAL OF RELIGION.

[Communicated by Rev. Mr. Miller.]

MADISON, (N. Y.) April 25, 1819.

Some time in September last, I learned that in the southern extremity of the town, there was more than common attention to religion; principally among the Methodists. Several persons from a mile or two north of the place, when this attention appeared, probably out of curiosity, went to the meetings; and it was soon evident that some of them were awakened. At this time there was a general stupidity prevailing in this place; sinners were going on to ruin unconcerned, and Christians were languid, neglecting their own souls and the souls of those who were perishing around them.—Our religious conferences were thinly attended, and few took any active part in them. The meeting from which I think the beginning of the revival in this society may be dated, was held at a private house, about 1 1-2 miles from the meeting house, on Monday evening, in the early part of November. Though but few were present, it was manifest that the Spirit of God was there. Christians were peculiarly earnest in prayer and exhortation, and some sinners who were present were brought under serious impressions. Soon after this, meetings were appointed in the vicinity, and attended by numbers who appeared serious; and some were anxiously inquiring what they must do to be saved. About this time, a prayer meeting was appointed in this place, at nine o'clock in the morning. This was a new time of meeting with us, and the power of

God was wonderful; Christians prayed and spoke with unusual spirit and life, and sinners around were in tears. One aged woman, at the close of this meeting, was brought to cry aloud in extreme distress, and seemed to view herself immediately sinking down to Hell. I pause here to remark, that the morning prayer meetings in this place have been peculiarly favoured with the divine presence; in many of them, Christians have discovered such earnestness in prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit of God, and the conversion of sinners, as I never before witnessed. Soon after this, the work spread to the east and west nearly across the town.

In the western part of the town, an uncommon instance of divine power was manifested. A man of about 30 years of age, who had been a very irreligious character, came into an evening meeting with the avowed design of ridiculing what might be said. Soon after he came in and took his seat, he began to feel disagreeable, and thought of leaving the house; but while he hesitated, his uneasiness increased every moment; his sins were set in order before him, and his distress became so great, that he cried aloud most of the time during the remaining part of the meeting. At the close it was found, such was his perturbation of mind, that he trembled and shook like the jailor when he came and fell down before Paul and Silas. Prayer was offered up for him in particular, and he dates his hope in the mercy of God from *that night*.

But while the flame was kindling in those different directions, a number who had been deeply impressed near where the attention began, seemed for a time to have their convictions suspended; and we began to fear their return to carnal security. God in his gracious Providence at this juncture sent a missionary, who was returning from the westward to this place, to assist in the work; and soon after, one of my brethren in the ministry, from a neighbouring town, spent a few days with us. It was not long before sever-

al of those persons who had become apparently less affected, were brought into the liberty of the Gospel; and it was manifest that the whole work was becoming more powerful in every direction.

At this time a circumstance took place which I cannot forbear to mention; a youth of about 14 or 15 years of age, who had been in deep distress for several weeks, was brought to rejoice in the mercy of God, and was immediately impressed with an ardent desire for the salvation of his brothers and sisters, and his father, who were yet in their sins. He went immediately from the meeting, where he obtained relief, with his brother, who was there, and who resided by himself, and prayed with him, and exhorted him to repentance in such a manner as deeply affected his mind. The next morning on his return home, accompanied by his brother, they called on his sister, who was married, and he requested her that she would kneel down with him and he would pray for her. The three knelt down together, and he prayed in a very warning and affecting manner, and so as much to impress the feelings of his sister.—From this place he returned home, and immediately fell into his father's arms, exhorting and entreating him, in the most tender and affectionate manner, to embrace the Gospel, mingling his prayers with his entreaties, that God would have mercy on him and on his brothers and sisters. It was an affecting scene—the whole family were in tears—most of them distressed for their sins, and were sensible that this was a peculiar call of God on them to repent.

Several who had embraced the doctrine of universal salvation, were brought to see that their foundation would not stand the trial of judgment. One man in particular, who was nearly 50 years of age, and was endeavouring with all his ability to support this doctrine, was in a prayer-meeting brought to see his foundation give way, and was so impressed, that he was constrained to rise and acknow-

ledge that his whole fabric was taken from him, as he expressed it, a thousand times below the foundation: and that he was an undone sinner. He very soon obtained relief from the mercy of God, and the next Sabbath, before the whole congregation, declared his conversion, and warned sinners, and those especially who were trusting to universal salvation, no longer to rest on their false foundation, but to repent and embrace the Gospel.

The work now spread to the north and the east part of the town, and soon became powerful. Numbers were suddenly cut down, and brought to confess their sins before all, and entreat the people of God to pray that divine mercy might be extended to their guilty souls. Persons who had been opposers, and far from righteousness, were in a very short time brought to the feet of sovereign mercy, and to give up their all to God.

At the village, and near the centre of the town, comparatively few have been the subjects of the work, though some in the vicinity have been hopefully converted. There has been much opposition in these places, and the feelings of many have evidently been to pray the Lord to depart out of their coasts.

The reformation has not been confined to any age. Persons from eight or nine years to eighty, have become the hopeful subjects of divine grace. A more than ordinary proportion have been men, and many of them heads of families. A number of pious women have peculiar cause of rejoicing that God has brought their companions to repentance, *and to submit with them in the cause of Christ.*

The work has appeared and made some progress in nearly every neighbourhood and district in this town; and this circumstance renders it difficult to ascertain with exactness, the number who have manifested hope in Christ. I have with some assistance enumerated between 180 and 190. Probably 200 may be nearer the true number.—Seventeen united with the congregational church in Madison, on

the first Sabbath in March; and thirty stand propounded to unite on the first Sabbath in May next. Some have united with other denominations, and the greater part have not as yet, publicly professed their faith in Christ.

J. M.

AMERICAN COLONIZATION SOCIETY.

From the National Intelligencer.

TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

The Board of Managers of the American Colonization Society beg leave to lay before you the following letter, from their agent, the Rev. Mr. Mead, relative to a most interesting subject, to which they some time since solicited the public attention. They return their warmest thanks to those from whose benevolence they have received contributions; and they hope that, although a considerable sum is still necessary for the attainment of their object, their appeal to the humanity of their fellow-citizens will be effectual.

* * Contributors will please to send their names and sums to DAVID ENGLISH, Esq. Treasurer.

Millidgeville, May 4, 1819.

My Dear Sir,—This day, which was to have been the day of bondage and sorrow to the poor Africans, on whose account I was sent to this place, has been turned into a day of liberty and joy to them. At least, I confidently hope that the arrangements we have made will eventuate thus happily, and that, before the year is ended, they will see their native land and all which they love most on earth. The Governor has postponed the sale, and afforded me an opportunity of seeking, among the humane and generous of this southern country, the means of their redemption. I enter upon this task to-morrow, by convening the citizens of this place to form an Auxiliary Society. An attempt has been made to recover these poor creatures into the hands of certain individuals who were concerned either in their first capture, or in their purchase and introduction in this state—but there is, I hope, nothing to fear from this com-

bination of avarice and oppression against the claims of justice and humanity. I arrived here on Saturday evening, and on Sunday morning walked out to their little encampment in the vicinity of the town to see them. As I approached their habitation I found them gathered around a good old man, into whose care they had been given, and who was telling them that some good people had sent me to prevent their sale, and carry them back to Africa. I wish you could have been with me to have witnessed their joy; they crowded around me, and by turns took hold of my hands, and in broken English expressed their gratitude. They at first (as the old man told me) would scarcely believe it; they had never heard of any such thing before, and it is no wonder they should doubt it. Even the next day one of them said to him, "white people never send negroes back to Africa; I never see my children again." The old man who had gained their confidence, asked them if he had ever told them a lie, and this seemed to encourage their faith. A very strong attachment has grown up between them and him, and I have seen them shed tears while speaking to them about leaving him. He asked one, who seemed more overjoyed than the rest at the thought of going, "if he wanted to leave old Daniel, (for that is his name,) who had taken such good care of him, and given him so much good messes?" The poor fellow hung his head as if convicted of ingratitude, and then said, "he did not want to leave him, but wanted home better;" and promised that "if he would go to Africa he would serve him two, three years, and give him too much good things." Indeed, my dear friend, a few moments were sufficient to satisfy me that they were the children of the same God with ourselves, having the same affections, and capable of the same enjoyments. On their countenance I could see written these memorable words: "Am I not a man and a brother?" Some of them so strikingly resemble some of our American ne-

groes, that I could have sworn I had seen them before, had I met them in any other place, or under different circumstances. Some of them have very sensible and amiable countenances, while others are vacant and unmeaning. They were captured in two parcels from Angola and Fowlah, and brought together at the Rio Pangos, from whence they were shipped. I learned the history of each one, and discovered that so far from all being taken in war and sold, instead of being killed, as the advocates of the slave trade maintain, not one of these were prisoners of war, but most of them seized by wretches hired for the purpose, in the fields, on the road, or sleeping in their houses. They express, by word, and the dismal contortion of their faces, the greatest horror at their treatment during the passage. Every morning many were taken out of the hold dead, and thrown (as they say) to be messes for the fish, and the rest could scarcely live for the horrid smell of the ship. It was in this cargo, or the one seized a short time before, and brought into Savannah, that, while off our coast, they were reduced to the necessity of eating the flesh from their own arms, for the sustenance of life. In conversing with such of them as had learned to speak the English tolerably well, I found that they had been to Sierra-Leone and Sherbro, and were well acquainted with those places. Many of them had seen Kissell, and said he was a good man; and, when I mentioned the name of Paul Cuffee, half a dozen at least cried out, yes! yes!—They seemed to know and appreciate his character. One of the boys in the parcel can write Arabic; and, I am told, in the other parcel, which were sold, there were several who must have been great men in their country, and who made considerable proficiency in such learning as might be acquired by intercourse with the northern part of Africa. One of them asked, with great concern, if we would not send back those who were sold last year, and seemed distressed at

being told that it would be impossible. A gentleman, who was present at the sale, describes their parting to their several masters, as a most afflicting scene. When they bid each other farewell, never expecting to meet again, they wept most bitterly, and plainly proved that the feelings of nature were as strong in them as in any others. This is a dreadful subject to write about, my dear friend, but it is my duty to give you such a detail: we must know the extent of the evil before we can apply a remedy.

The Africans whose release we are seeking will be left under the care of the same good old man already mentioned, and whom I cannot mention too often with too much commendation. God seems to have raised him up to be the friend of these unfortunate race of beings; he is never as happy as when in the midst of them, and they ever look up to him as their best friend. He is universally beloved in this place. You cannot mention his name, but each one exclaims, 'Daniel is the best man in the world, and the fittest person to manage these poor captives.' So much is he devoted to this cause, and so generous is his nature, that, though very poor, he said he would give fifty dollars of his wages to the Society. He will conduct them to the ship, whenever they go on to Smith's Island, if they be ordered there; indeed it would be impossible to get them to follow any other person, for they confide in no other.

I have now given you all the necessary information about the special object of my mission to this place. On Friday, I set out for Augusta, where I shall spend several days, thence to Savannah, Beaufort, Charleston, Geo. Town, Wilmington, and so on to Virginia. It will be some time in July before I reach home, even without any unexpected delay.

With sincerity, I remain your friend,
WILLIAM MEAD.

E. B. CALDWELL,
Secretary American Colonization Society.

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